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CALIFORNIA STATE THREAT ASSESSMENT CENTER

24-HOUR REPORT

24 JULY 2018

(U) CALIFORNIA

(U) Sacramento – Judges Crack Down on Illicit Inmate Cellphones

(U) Judges in California and South Carolina have ordered cellphone carriers to disable nearly 200 contraband cellphones used by inmates to orchestrate crimes behind and outside prison walls, the most sweeping order of its kind ever won by corrections officials. It's an important victory for prison officials who have been frustrated by their inability to stop the flow of smuggled phones that are used to coordinate drug deals, gang operations and killings.

SOURCE: 23 July 2018, [SF Gate](#)

(U) NATIONAL

(U) District of Columbia – Russian Hackers Reach US Utility Control Rooms

(U) Washington – Hackers working for Russia claimed “hundreds of victims” last year in a giant and long-running campaign that put them inside the control rooms of US electric utilities where they could have caused blackouts, federal officials said. They said the campaign likely is continuing. The Russian hackers, who worked for a state-sponsored group previously identified as Dragonfly or Energetic Bear, broke into supposedly secure, “air-gapped” or isolated networks owned by utilities with relative ease by first penetrating the networks of key vendors who had trusted relationships with the power companies. DHS has been warning utility executives with security clearances about the Russian group’s threat to critical infrastructure since 2014.

SOURCE: 23 July 2018, [Wall Street Journal](#)

(U) Florida – Coast Guard Seizes \$729 Million Worth of Cocaine

(U) St Petersburg – The Coast Guard seized nearly three-quarters of a billion dollars’ worth of cocaine over the past two months from smugglers who had attempted to move drugs by boat from Central and South America to the US through international waters. Coast Guard vessels deployed to the region over the past two months intercepted traffickers and took approximately 52,900 pounds of cocaine valued at \$729 million from those boats into custody. Fifty-seven suspected smugglers were also taken into custody.

SOURCE: 23 July 2018, [Washington Examiner](#)

(U) Pennsylvania – Algerian Man Pleads Guilty To Conspiring To Provide Support to Terrorism

(U) Philadelphia – Ali Charaf Damache, 53, a national of Algeria and citizen of Ireland, aka Theblackflag, plead guilty yesterday to conspiracy to provide material support and resources to terrorists. Damache was indicted in 2011 in the Eastern District of Pennsylvania on one count of conspiracy to provide material support to terrorists and one count of attempted identity theft to facilitate an act of international terrorism. US authorities extradited Damache from Spain in July 2017. According to the indictment, Damache, his co-defendant Mohammad Hassan Khalid, and others conspired to support, recruit, and coordinate a terrorist cell, consisting of men and women from Europe and the United States, to wage violent jihad in and around Europe.

SOURCE: 23 July 2018, [US DOJ](#)

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UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY**(U) INTERNATIONAL****(U) Germany – Ricin Plot Suspect's Wife Arrested**

(U) Cologne – The wife of a Tunisian man detained last month over a plot to use the toxin ricin to carry out an attack in Germany was arrested today on suspicion of being an accomplice. Federal prosecutors said the 42-year-old German, named only as Yasmin H., is suspected of helping prepare an act of violence and helping produce biological weapons. Her husband, Sief Allah H., was arrested on 12 June. Prosecutors previously said that about 3,150 castor bean seeds and 84.3 milligrams of ricin were found at the main suspect's Cologne apartment, along with components needed to make a bomb. Tiny amounts of ricin can kill an adult if eaten, injected or inhaled.

SOURCE: 24 July 2018, [KRMG](#)

(U) Iran – Iran's Growing Cyber Capabilities Pose Danger

(U) Tehran – Iran has expanded its cyber-attack capabilities and poses a danger to German companies and research institutions, Germany's BfV domestic intelligence agency said in its annual report. The report, released today by German Interior Minister Horst Seehofer and the BfV agency, cited steadily increasing cyber-attacks with a likely origin in Iran since 2014, and said numerous such attacks were seen on German targets in 2017. While fighting to preserve the 2015 nuclear accord with Iran after the US withdrawal, Germany has also become increasingly vocal with its concerns about Iran's missile development activities, its backing for militant groups in regional conflicts, and spying activities.

SOURCE: 24 July 2018, [Reuters](#)

(U) Iraq – ISIS Makes Comeback in Iraq with Shift to Guerrilla Tactics

(U) Baghdad – Months after Iraq declared victory over ISIS, its fighters are making a comeback with a scatter-gun campaign of kidnap and killings. With its dream of a Caliphate in the Middle East now dead, ISIS has switched to hit-and-run attacks aimed at undermining the government in Baghdad, according to military, intelligence and government officials interviewed by Reuters. ISIS was reinventing itself months before Baghdad announced in December that it had defeated the group, according to intelligence officials who said it would adopt guerrilla tactics when it could no longer hold territory.

SOURCE: 23 July 2018, [Reuters](#)

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